



UNITED NATIONS  
YEMEN



OSESGY  
Special Envoy for Yemen



# GENDER STRATEGY

PEACE SUPPORT FACILITY

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# BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The impact of the conflict in Yemen has been devastating. Women and girls are among the most vulnerable bearing the heaviest burden of violence, inequality, and poverty. Conflict adds multiple layers of risks on women and girls including gender-based violence. Gender roles often shift during conflict and present an opportunity for women to participate in public life and economy.<sup>1</sup> However, women's unpaid

work is not recognized by the economic system, resulting in economic injustice for women.

Additionally, structural inequalities and discriminating social norms often block women and girls from participating in social, economic, and political life. For instance, in Yemen, the female labor force participation rate is only 6 per cent. The United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Assessing the Impact of

War in Yemen report indicates “increasing women’s participation in the economy and society has potential to unlock significant economic gains.”<sup>2</sup> And according to the Global Gender Gap Index 2021, Yemen is ranked 155 out of 156 countries.<sup>3</sup>

Since the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 in 2000 and the subsequent nine other UNSC resolutions which make up an international policy framework, called the Women Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda, there is growing global recognition that women should participate in all realms of peace and security and that gender perspectives must be integrated in peace and security institutions, policies, and approaches.

The Government of Yemen prepared a Women Peace and Security (WPS)<sup>4</sup> National Action Plan (NAP) in 2020 with the coordination of different national counterparts and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). However, many institutions and women-led organizations struggle with the pre-requisite technical and operational capacities and lack funding to advance the WPS agenda due to the social, educational, and digital divide disproportionately experienced by women. Moreover, there are very few women in the security structures, and low levels of awareness and understanding of gender perspectives on conflict and security among decision-makers and security actors.

UNDP strives to promote gender equality as a fundamental human right. The work is guided by its Gender Equality Strategy 2018

– 2021 which demonstrates the UNDP commitment to gender equality as a human right and a prerequisite to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, particularly Gender Equality (SDG 5), a key enabler of all other SDGs, and SDG 16 on Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions.

Moreover, the UNDP Yemen Country Strategy Note 2021 – 2024 emphasizes applying gender responsive and transformative approaches in the programing to address the root causes of gender inequality. It strategizes partnership with national and international organizations to enhance the impact of gender work. Furthermore, the UNDP Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025 adopts a systems approach to deliver integrated solutions. Gender equality is an integral part of confronting the structural challenges, as well as directing systemic change through the Human Rights Based Approach and the “Leaving No One Behind” principle.

The Peace Support Facility's (PSF) Gender Strategy aims to outline the vision of promoting gender equality, women's empowerment, and the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda. The strategy is aligned with the UNDP Gender Equality Strategy 2018 – 2021, the UNDP Yemen Country Strategy Note 2021 – 2024, the UNDP Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025, SDG 5 targets 5.1, 5.2, 5.5, and the 10 United Nations Security Council resolutions that make up the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda. Moreover, it reflects the recommendation of the PSF Midterm Review for more gender-inclusive implementation and reporting.

# PROPOSED GENDER STRATEGY

The gender strategy is crucial to ensure the full institutional responsibility for advancing the WPS agenda and mainstreaming gender equality and having a vision on combating gender inequality and building sustainable peace. The PSF will adopt a twin-track strategy.

## Mainstreaming Gender

By systemically integrating gender into the PSF projects' cycle, starting from needs assessments, and ending with evaluation and learning, gender will be mainstreamed in three Result Areas:

- **Result Area 1:** Initiatives to build confidence between parties in the peace process.
- **Result Area 2:** Activities originating from recommendations and Track II findings and other relevant subnational inclusive dialogues with the goal of catalyzing the political process.
- **Result Area 3:** Transitional governance arrangements as and when the parties agree. In addition to projects, such as Floating Storage and Offloading unit (FSO), that are high risk, requires risk-sharing among donors, and is too sensitive for donors to fund directly.

## Gender Stand-alone Actions

These are responses that address the gender gaps as identified in the PSF gender analysis that cannot be mainstreamed. Actions should be context-specific, using innovative approaches and engaging women and men to bring about transformative gender change while addressing root causes to promote gender equality, the WPS Agenda and building peace for all.

Humanitarian and emergency assistance remain of paramount importance in Yemen and, together with our partners, we can bridge the gap between humanitarian and sustainable development responses. From our rich regional and global experience, we know that an inclusive development approach is not only the foundation, but a prerequisite, for lasting peace and that there can be no peace without development.

Graph 1: Proposed PSF Gender Strategy Structure



# | APPROACHES

While implementing projects, the PSF will use the following approaches.

## Human Rights-based

Affirming and protecting the fundamental rights of vulnerable groups – especially women and girls – in line with the international human rights' instruments. This includes the following: the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966); the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (1979); the Women Peace and Security Agenda and its 10 United Nations Security Council resolutions<sup>5</sup>; the Youth, Peace, and Security resolution 2250 (2015); and the Beijing Declaration and Platform (1995).

## Intersectional

It is necessary to make the range of individual experiences visible and acknowledge that gender is one of multiple dimensions such as class, ethnicity, race that can shape identity, roles and norms, access to resources, and the social relations of women and girls, men, and boys. Adopting an intersectional lens recognizes the heterogeneous community with the aim to eradicate oppression and marginalization. It is crucial to comprehensive analysis, advocacy, and policy development.

## Participatory

Consultations with internal and external stakeholders, and a sense of ownership of PSF strategy, actions, and transforming discriminatory social norms that perpetuate gender inequality practices, as well as peace and security institutions and their marginalizing practices and policies is key. Moreover, close collaboration and participation is needed from UNDP staff, local communities, women-led local organizations, religious leaders, academic institutions, civil society, private sector, donors, development partners, and other stakeholders to access their knowledge, increase ownership of results achieved, and increase the likelihood that stakeholders will continue to be active agents in promoting gender equality and peace.

## Inclusive

Ensuring that all PSF interventions are inclusive for all, "Leaving No One Behind" regardless of their background, gender, abilities, or status, including groups that are traditionally marginalized, or at risk of exclusion. This includes women and youth belonging to minority groups living in remote areas with access limitation to services, and those with disabilities, and the displaced.

# | OVERALL OBJECTIVE

PSF's Gender Strategy aims to ensure gender responsiveness while recognizing and fulfilling the distinct needs of women and girls related to peace and security.

Additionally, it includes the promotion of women's full and meaningful participation and the integration of gender perspectives in building sustainable peace.





# OUTCOMES

**Outcome 1:** Improved mainstreaming of gender and the WPS Agenda throughout PSF-supported projects

PSF will mainstream gender into the project activities focusing on gender analysis throughout building the capacity of staff and implementing partners (IPs) and developing operational tools. This includes:

- Developing Gender Inclusion Mainstreaming Framework.

- Developing and implementing capacity building for the UNDP PSF staff members and IPs on gender, gender marker, gender-based violence (GBV), prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) assessment, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), WPS, etc.
- Integrating gender analysis into the project cycle.

- Addressing GBV risks in programming.
- Developing tools to integrate gender analysis into projects.
- Assessing IPs PSEA level encompass developing/using already existing PSEA assessment tool.
- Strengthening reporting on gender equality (GE) projects and components, as well as on the WPS Agenda.
- Identifying the IPs gender advisors and/or focal points and build their capacity to facilitate the gender mainstreaming and promotion and integration of the WPS Agenda.

**Outcome 2:** Enhanced women's and youth's full and meaningful participation in social and political life

PSF will promote women's, youth and women-lead organizations role in peacebuilding. This includes:

- Providing funds for WPS and women's empowerment project ideas initiated by community especially women and youth (under Result Area 2).
- Raising awareness of communities around most persistent gender, GBV and WPS issues.

- Strengthening women-led community-based associations.

**Outcome 3:** Increased awareness, strategic allies, and implementation regarding gender equality promotion and the WPS agenda

PSF will promote cooperation, partnership and alliance building to support advocacy, information production and women effective participation in peacebuilding and WPS agenda. This includes support to:

- The implementation of the Yemen NAP for WPS.
- Conducting research on the most persistent gender and WPS issues.
- Arranging workshops and conferences to exchange experiences of similar context successful initiatives.
- Building women's negotiation skills.
- Building capacity of journalists/activists/human rights specialists/lawyers to use gender sensitive language and other gender related issues.
- Developing communication materials.
- Engaging men and boys in supporting gender equality actions and combating GBV.

# UNDP RESOURCES

## Human Resources:

The PSF has recruited a Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist (P3). The position is funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) for one year to support a more gender inclusive implementation of the PSF and to support the Country Office (CO) to enhance gender sensitive programming. Mainstreaming gender is the responsibility of everyone. Therefore, the proposed actions and activities will support gender mainstreaming efforts and building the capacity of all staff to mainstream gender and the WPS Agenda into programmes.

## Financial resources:

Depending on the availability of funds, the PSF will support stand-alone gender initiatives through Result Area 2 in

UN agencies building on the competitive advantage of each organization to complement each other, leverage resources and ensure having the capacity building of local NGOs embedded in these partnerships. Should the PSF's life span be extended, the PSF will build on the first set of initiatives.

UNDP is collaborating with Norway to support the implementation of the NAP on WPS. PSF has already pledged to support the action. While Norway has deployed Gender and Women, Peace and Security expert. This could be an opportunity to mobilize additional resources to implement gender specific initiatives under the PSF. Coordination among the UNDP units will be enhanced for effective interventions, while ensuring



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